



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

AERE CONLATO

BY J. F. FERGUSON
Bryn Mawr College

One of the most attractive features of the Roman world was its generosity. Every town throughout the empire seems to have had its Agrippa and Herodes Atticus from whom it received many of the material comforts and some of the luxuries of life. Gifts of corn and money, public buildings, magnificent games and gladiatorial combats are recorded on thousands of memorials to men who contributed them. Much of this lavish expenditure may be regarded as a payment of tax, for the theory of ancient government placed a heavy financial burden on the rich, but men gave also because of a love of their town and of their fellow-citizens. The great number of such givers and the munificence of their gifts has, however, obscured another form of generosity—gifts from groups of individuals or of communities. In comparison with individual gifts they are small and trivial, yet they deserve more study than they have received.

In the *Corpus* of Latin inscriptions there are nearly two hundred inscriptions¹ recording voluntary subscriptions. They come from all the Latin-speaking provinces except Britain, though from Gallia Narbonensis and the three Gauls there are not more than six or seven examples; a fact to be explained probably by the absence of municipal organization there and a consequent lack of community spirit. On the other hand, there are numerous inscriptions from Italy, Spain, and Africa, where municipal organization was general.

The term generally used in recording the gift is *aere conlato*, although such expressions as *ex stipe*, *ex voluntaria civium conlatione*, *inlata pecunia*, *ex pecunia viritim conlata*, *conlata certatim*

¹ The most complete lists of these inscriptions are found in Ruggiero, *Dizionario Epigrafico*, article "conlatio"; Olcott, *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae Epigraphicae*, article "aere conlato." A brief discussion of gifts made by *collegia* is given in Waltzing, *Corporations Professionelles*, I, 464; Reid, *Municipalities of the Roman Empire*, p. 498.

pecunia, are to be found. In only one instance is it recorded how the contribution was collected. The *centumviri*, *seviri*, *Augustales*, and *municipes intramurani* of Veii, wishing to honor a *Cvir* for his devotion to the city, collected money from those sitting in the orchestra during a celebration of the public games (XI, 3809). There is no great variety in the form of the gifts; sums of money, memorial tablets, statues, and office are the usual offering.

The contributions fall into three general classes. The first is composed of gifts made by members of *collegia* such as *dendrophori*, *seviri*, *centumviri*, *fabri*, *centonarii*, *piscatores*. These inscriptions come from Italy, Histria, and Sardinia. They record the appreciation of the members of these *collegia* for a feast or *sportula* given by a patron of their guild, or their recognition of public officials for *insignis venationes*, or *quod in honore IIviratus industriae administrato omnibus plebis desideriis satisfecit*, or for undefined *merita* (cf. V, 1012; VI, 29702; XI, 418).

Another class records gifts from groups not organized into *collegia*, as may be shown by a few examples. The *familia urbana* of Cerellia Sabina set up a memorial to her (VI, 1747); several citizens, whose names are inscribed on the monument, contributed jointly for a gift to Septimius Severus (VIII, 2438); Panclis, when he was chosen decurion at Rome, was presented with a purse of money by his *familia* (VI, 9289); an old veteran who had seen thirty-two campaigns at his retirement was presented with *clipeco, coronis, aenulis aureis* by his fellow-soldiers (XIII, 1041). A most interesting instance is that from Asisium recording a gift to C. Alfius Clemens Maximus *quaestor alimentorum* by girls and boys *qui ex liberalitate sacratissimi principis alimenta accipiunt consensu parentium ex aere conlato* (XI, 5395).

The third and largest group is composed of contributions made by the community as a whole or in part, and it is this feature of *aere conlato* gifts that has been largely overlooked. Examples of community gifts are frequent in Italy, but are especially characteristic of Spain and Africa. The *plebs urbana*, or, as they sometimes call themselves, *plebs universa* or *plebs utriusque sexus*, were the most frequent contributors. Frequently other classes and *collegia* joined with them and they all contributed under the general name

municipes or *cives*, sometimes more explicitly named *municipes intramurani*, or *extramurani*, or *ordo et plebs*. These contributions were not confined to citizens alone, for we find that the *incolae*—resident aliens—were often allowed to share in the subscription. Like those of the other groups their gifts took the form of memorials to some benefactor, in this case a benefactor of the town. A few examples will illustrate this. An inscription from Niretum dating from the fourth century tells how in return for the public services of a certain Salvius Balerius *necesse est eum remunerari oportere; placet itaque universo populo empurii Naunitani tabulam aere incisam ei offerre devere*, the money to be collected *a devotissimo populo* (IX, 10). A community in Africa records its thanks to an official *quod frumentum intulerit et annonam passus non sit increscere* (VIII, 9250). Cartenna in expressing its gratitude to one who had saved the town from a hostile attack assured him that the honor is one never before granted—*primo ipsi, nec ante ulli* (VIII, 9663). African towns were never noted for modesty in their memorials; their benefactors were always exceptional, their citizens very distinguished. The curials of Simithu, for instance, erected a statue to Veturius Fortunatus *ob summam in diem vitae adfectionem et administrationem IIviratus incomparabilem et innocentiam singularem utilitatibus publicis commodisque semper exhibitam* (VIII, 1261). The following from Thagaste might be suspected of having been written by the secretary of the local chamber of commerce. Its *splendidissimus ordo* made a "drive" (*conlata certatim pecunia*) to buy a gift for a Roman knight in return for his *singularis fides, bonitas, munificentia* (VIII, 5146). Women, too, were honored by towns for their own worthy characters and their liberality, or because their fathers or husbands had placed the towns in their debt (cf. VIII, 5365). And at least one poet was not without honor in his own country. From Histonium comes the inscription: *L. Valerio L. f. Pudenti hic cum esset annorum XIII Romae certamine sacro Jovis Capitolini lustro sexto [106 A.D.] claritate ingenii coronatus est inter poetas Latinos omnibus sententiis iudicium; huic plebs universa municipum Histonesium statuam aere collato decrevit* (IX, 2860).

Occasionally the people found their liberality matched by that of the person honored, and one can believe that it was with a feeling

of satisfaction, not to say of virtue rewarded, that the people added to their record the notice, the recipient *honore contentus ex suo (statuam) posuit et conlationem reddidit* (IX, 3258). One who had been so honored by the *iuvenes Herculani* was so pleased that he not only remitted the amount of the gift but left a sum the interest of which, amounting to 2,000 S, was to provide an annual *sportula* (X, 5657). Another at the dedication of some memorial gave 100,000 S to his city and to the curials *praeter epulas vini et ludum denarios quingenos* (VIII, 5146).

There are but few examples of contributions for public works. The most famous is that from Alcantara, Spain, where several *civitates* raised the money to build a bridge over the Tagus (II, 760). At Tegeanum in Campania just before the civil war between Antony and Octavius citizens repaired the walls and fortifications of the town by voluntary subscriptions, apparently in amounts varying from one to two hundred sesterces, if we may trust the broken inscriptions (X, 290, 291). Two inscriptions from Beneventum tell of the repair of the Via Appia by Hadrian and *possessores agrorum* for a distance of 15,750 *passus* at a total cost of 11,047,000 S, of which the landowners paid 569,100 S (IX, 6072, 6075). At Falerium in 119 A.D. property owners, merchants, and *collegia* whose business interests centered around the *forum pecuarium* paid at least a part of the cost of paving a new street which passed through the middle of the forum (IX, 5438).

There are a few instances to be found in literary accounts. Tacitus (*Hist.* iii. 34) in a very brief sentence says that the fora and temples of Cremona in the terrible year 70 A.D. were repaired by the splendid liberality of the citizens. Pliny (*Epist.* iv. 13) advocated the plan of a community subscription as the best for providing a salary of a good teacher for Como; whether they acted on his suggestion is uncertain. Lollianus, a sophist who lived in Athens at the time of Hadrian and later, collected a large sum of money from his friends to buy and import grain into Athens at a time of great scarcity (Philost. *Vit. Soph.* 23).

In the *Corpus* there are many inscriptions almost identical in form with those of the third group, but which lack the words *aere conlato*; these probably should be included, for they are all records

of gifts by citizens and resident aliens who probably did not have a treasury upon which they could draw for all expenses. For such unusual expenses as erection of statues and other memorials it seems likely that the money was voted on each separate occasion, and then collected by popular subscription. The absence of *aere conlato* is no argument against such an assumption, for it is sometimes missing in cases where there is no doubt about the method of procuring the money.

These inscriptions are of value in showing the economic situation of the towns during the period of the early empire. The financial depression which began to be felt in the agricultural districts of the western half of the empire, from Hadrian's reign if not before, had not settled on the towns to any appreciable degree. Rich citizens continued to erect public buildings and to provide entertainments without any thought of economy, and, what is more to the point, the common people still were spending money freely for such unnecessary objects as memorial statues and honors. The rich might continue to give during hard times, the poor could not. The prosperity of the towns during this period is a point strongly emphasized by Professor Reid in his study of Roman municipalities, and these inscriptions offer further evidence to confirm his claim. That community gifts were not more common is due probably to the unlimited claim which the people had upon the wealth of emperors and rich citizens. Their generosity left little room for public contributions; it was the duty of the rich to give, of the poor to enjoy, and the latter learned the lesson well.

Below is a list of the inscriptions in the *Corpus* which record *aere conlato* gifts.

II: 34, 53, 760, 1306, 1348, 1380, 1572, 1971, 2022, 2025, 2044, 2086, 5439.

III: 753, 1210, 1493, 1494, 2026, 2087, 2920, 3016, 5659, 6294, 7429-753, 11255, 12299, 12695.

V: 56, 331, 335, 1012, 8289.

VI: 214, 226, 349, 409(?), 458, 815, 899, 909, 910, 1747, 4421, 5818, 6220, 9289, 10258, 10332, 10408, 11034, 11035, 11375, 12361, 21771, 23328, 29700, 29702, 30901.

VIII: 1261, 2438, 4599, 4893, 5146, 5231, 5363, 5365, 5366, 5368, 6710, 6711, 7103, 7119, 7918, 7953, 8328, 8329, 8397, 9250, 9317, 9402, 9643, 9663, 12297, 14291, 14372, 14672, 14612=1261, 14769, 15666, 15667, 15669, 17259?, 17327?, 18767?, 19697, 23863.

IX: 10, 312, 698, 974, 975, 977, 981, 1459, 2252, 2599, 2860?, 3383, 3685, 3838, 3842, 4064, 4208, 5438, 5644, 6072, 6075.

X: 113, 211, 291, 344, 411, 676, 689, 1217, 1434, 1447, 1452, 1576, 1710?, 1818, 1831, 4621, 4893, 5066, 5438, 5656, 5657, 5963?, 5968, 6005, 6090, 6240, 7238, 7286, 7294, 7490, 7495, 7507, 7508, 7604, 7915, 7918, 7953, 8099, 8397.

XI: 1?, 387, 418, 1838, 3210, 3211, 3256, 3258, 3798, 3807-3809, 3936, 4180, 4209?, 4580, 4582, 4660, 4744, 4748, 4750, 4751, 5054, 5395, 5634, 5677, 5679, 6054, 6356, 6360, 6481.

XII: 3084, 3134?, 4189, 4321.

XIII: 1041?, 3106, 8250.

XIV: 246, 326, 490, 2408, 2472, 2636, 3564, 3591, 3599, 3663.